

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Discussion on current consequences and interventions for low-performing schools and schools with significant achievement gaps and proposed additional consequences and interventions (Proposed additional consequences and interventions under separate cover)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.649, KRS 160.345, KRS 160.346, 703 KAR 5:120, and 703 KAR 5:130

History/Background:

Existing Policy. In recent months the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) requested and received reports on the work of the Achievement Gap Coordinators, the achievement gap initiatives within the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), plans for closing the achievement gap for students with disabilities, and strategies for closing the achievement gap for all students. Additionally, the KBE has heard reports about low-performing schools in the state that have not adequately responded to interventions by KDE staff. In all of these discussions the KBE has expressed its concern about the rate of improvement in Kentucky's schools and districts that have chronically, low-performing schools. In response, the KBE requested that the Commissioner relate its concerns and urgency to educators. An article to teachers was published in *Kentucky Teacher*, a letter to superintendents of low-performing schools was mailed and the "urgency" message has been incorporated into all of the Commissioner's speeches. The word is out and being discussed and debated.

Additionally, the KBE has requested a plan to: a) address closing the achievement gaps; b) make recommendations for more intensive interventions that will result in significantly improved student achievement; and c) make these recommendations mandatory for the schools and districts that have not responded to previous interventions.

As a starting point, it is critical to pull together what we have in place. Attached is a chart that outlines the current types of status that schools and districts could fall into based on statewide assessment scores. The chart shows a dual system for federal and state accountability and affirms our need to reduce confusion and ensure uniformity in application of consequences and interventions. The chart also emphasizes the need for amendments to administrative regulations in order to unify the two systems. Regulatory changes are also needed to provide additional authority to KDE to intervene on behalf of students that are not having their needs met.

Recommendations for additional consequences and interventions. Under separate cover, the KBE will receive more specific information on proposed recommendations to amend regulations and proposals for additional consequences and interventions that are designed to improve low-

performing schools, to assist schools and districts in meeting the needs of all students and to eliminate achievement gaps.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Research on effective schools and school practices has clearly demonstrated that schools and school systems can become more effective in increasing performance levels of students. With additional regulatory authority, KDE will be able to provide more intensive interventions to the schools and districts that have demonstrated the need for this level of intervention.

Contact Person:

Johnnie Grissom
Associate Commissioner
Office of Special Instructional Services
502-564-4970
Johnnie.Grissom@education.ky.gov

Steve Schenck
Associate Commissioner
Office of Leadership and School
Improvement
502-564-2116
Stephen.Schenck@education.ky.gov

Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner of Education

Date:

October 2005